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The relation...Pacific Coast
to Education in the Orient

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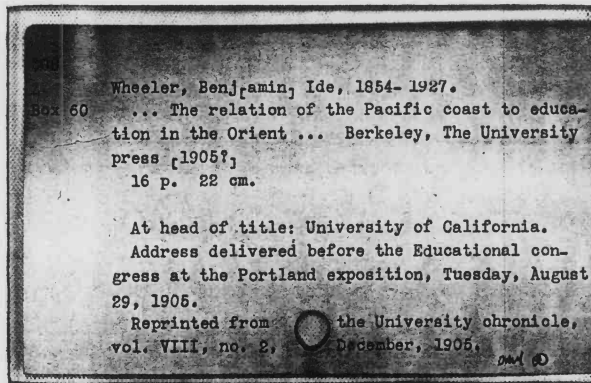
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**THE RELATION OF THE PACIFIC COAST TO
EDUCATION IN THE ORIENT**

BENJ. IDE WHEELER

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

THE RELATION OF THE PACIFIC COAST TO
EDUCATION IN THE ORIENT

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THE RELATION OF THE PACIFIC COAST TO
EDUCATION IN THE ORIENT.¹

BENJ. IDE WHEELER.

The ends of the earth at last have met. They have met and joined on the American continent midway between the Asiatic East and the European West. A place and shelter for the meeting has been prepared in the form of a nation blended out of all the bloods of mankind and builded neither on race nor the cults of kinship, but on the rights of man. This much has human society done, and geography has enforced the work by setting the abode of this nation between the two world-seas whose free highways make their side of the globe the easier way from the old Occident to the old Orient. Four hundred years after the Cabots touched the Atlantic hem of North America and one hundred years after Lewis and Clark brought the Cabots' work to fulfillment in carrying the Anglo-Saxon name through to the Pacific hem, in the year of our Lord, 1905, delegates of the greatest European empire followed the track of the sun a hundred degrees of longitude westward and delegates of the most vigorous Eastern power

¹Address delivered before the Educational Congress at the Portland Exposition Tuesday, August 29, 1905. It was an interesting coincidence that after the close of the address and during the discussion which followed it, the first tidings of the conclusion of peace between Russia and Japan reached Portland and was announced to the Congress.

faced the sun and journeyed one hundred and thirty degrees eastward until they met in Portsmouth, and if they had reversed the division of distance it would have been in Portland;—in either case upon a continent prepared for them by collusion between the separate developments of government and of geography, upon a continent which was no other than that unexpected dyke of land which only four centuries ago suddenly arose out of the ocean's mists, and planted itself upon the map to block Columbus' way, when he sought the Orient by reversing the direction of the old-time caravan routes.

The arteries of empire and commerce in the twentieth century world pulse through the two great oceans. The great powers are those that maintain great navies. The ancient world looked inward with its back to the oceans and dealt with the land and inland seas. Power was quoted in terms of armies, and what were called fleets were merely armies fighting from scows in land-locked waters.

The ancient world in its highest organization consisted of two mutually exclusive parts, on the one hand Europe with Mohammedan Asia and Africa, on the other India and China. Between the two there was exchange of goods at arm's length, but no exchange of ideas or institutions. The Occident and the Orient dwelt apart and developed as antitheses. They never have understood each other; the fundamental concepts of the life-thought differ *totò coelo*.

The old Occident, Europe and Mohammedan Asia and Africa, was established in a blend of two minor antitheses, Europe and the Nearer East. The Mediterranean was the mixing pot, Constantinople was the label and seal. The Nearer East had the sources of its life in the civilizations of the two great river-valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates. Europe assorted its races by means of its rivers, pre-eminently the Volga, the Dnieper, the Vistula, the Elbe, the Danube, the Rhine, the Seine, the Rhone, and the Po;

and by its two southern peninsulas, Greece and Italy, inserted the wick into the oil of the greater world civilization. Greece discovered the creative freedom of the human mind, and established thereon the only human freedom that was ever worth the while; Palestine yielded faith in the goodness and power of the Single God; Rome provided for this mind and spirit the body of law and government, and out of the trinity arose the Mediterranean civilization we call European, of which our history, politics, art, thought, ethics, religion, in fact we all of us in all our spiritual being and environment are thus far an established part.

Over against this Mediterranean Occident has stood through all the ages unperturbed and impenetrable the incomprehensible Orient of India and China. The West could only understand their spices; not their salt. And for the spices and other spicy wares the dull camels tramped the Kashgar and the Kabul routes through the dark and unrecorded centuries, the only bond between the two great world-halves which were and are and mayhap always shall be. Nineveh and Trebizond, Babylon, Tyre and Sidon were built of the drippings of this inter-world-half trade, then when it diverged through the Red Sea Alexandria was enriched by it, and later when the Saracens intervened to disturb the old routes, Venice and Genoa became its monuments, and last of all with the discovery of the route around the Cape of Good Hope *nations* were enriched, first Portugal, then Holland, then England. It was not a new continent that Columbus set out to discover, but the old spices and gold of the old Orient. The finding of America instead was his undoing.

The yearning of the West has always been toward the East. It has sought its wares and spices, but behind all that has lain the half-formulated, half-confessed instinct to lay hand on the slumbering power that lurks behind the mystery of the East stored in the long-schooled industrial

patience of the Chinaman and the cosmic philosophy of the Hindoo. The emergence of the American continents as a mighty barrier across the path of the western route became a discouragement to the thought of using that route. The search for a passage to the north of North America persistently failed. The southern tip of South America pushed itself down more than twenty degrees of latitude farther than the Cape of Good Hope. Even the narrow isthmus of Panama proved a barrier rather than a highway. It took four centuries for men fully to dominate the barrier by occupying it with homes and cutting it through with steel highways. It will be yet a decade or more before the Panama canal is cut through.

Meantime the outreach toward the Orient has reverted to the eastern routes. First came the route round the Cape of Good Hope which created the colonial system of Holland and the empire of England. Then came the shortcut by the Suez Canal through the Red Sea. Then came the project of a railway joining southeastern Europe by way of Asia Minor and Persia to the head of the Persian Gulf. Then came the development of Russia's trans-Caspian route by steamers across the Caspian and railway on through Turkestan by Samarkand. Only the check of English power has prevented northern Persia and northern Afghanistan from melting into the jurisdiction of Russia and admitting the passage of a railway by the old route, Teheran to Herat to Kabul to India. So the ways revert to the old-time track of the caravans. And finally was built the trans-Siberian line on Russia's own soil almost to the shores of the Pacific. Even if northern Manchuria could be called Russian soil, it could not yet be granted that a railway issuing at Vladivostok had reached the Pacific, for that port was closed a third of the year by ice. The day came however when the watchful eye of England was averted or was closed in sleep. Russia displaced England in its place as China's good friend and

forced it over into an alliance with Japan. Li Hung Chang was bought with Russian gold. Russia carried her railway through to Port Arthur, and at last had found the open sea, and enrolled her destiny with the nations which found their empire in battle ships that ply the outer oceans. For centuries she had struggled to reach an ocean, but the nations plotted to keep her an inland power. The Baltic is almost an inland sea; its harbors are ice-bound in the winter, and Scandinavians and Germans control its exits. The Great Powers by a conspiracy of inaction leave the stranded hulk of Turkey to block the exit of the Black Sea. When Russia has looked for a way out by the Persian Gulf, England has always been ready to set a check, and now the interests of Germany which in recent years has been establishing itself as guardian of senile Turkey, will be even more potent to prevent. The commercial and perhaps the political interests of Germany lead her along the southwestern face of the Russian glacier. Her wares move southeast. In this direction too is the line of least resistance for the development of her political power. The railway to the head of the Persian Gulf will be hers. It is therefore just at present her policy to be the good friend and candid adviser of Russia, and gather in all the wreckage that issues from Russian disaster.

When at last in 1898 Russia seemed to have found its clear way to the open sea it appeared that the history of the world had advanced into a new stadium. A new power had entered the lists for the empire of the outer ocean. Northern and Central China were to be brought into relations and assimilated to the West through the mediation of half-occidental, half-oriental Russia, and oriental Japan of occidental veneer was to be robbed of its task, and stand doomed to finally inevitable absorption into the mass of Russia. Then it was that two events presented the opportunity for a total shifting of the horoscope.

These two events were the Boxer uprising and the Russo-Japanese war.

The former gave the opportunity for the issuance of John Hay's circular note stating the policy of the "open door." The circular note was a device forced upon our State Department by the classical incompetency of the United States Senate under its present constitution and its unwritten rules of courtesy. It is now a body incapable of largeness of view or promptitude of action. John Hay seized the opportunity and secured the assent of the powers to a policy opposed to partition of China, and established this policy—especially since the reaffirmation obtained by a second note, in a security as firm as any body of international treaties could assure. Throughout the Boxer troubles John Hay deftly avoided all recognition of the uprising as involving a state of war, and thus prevented Russia from obtaining a hold upon Manchuria that could arise from conditions of war. Herein lay his most certain and distinguished diplomatic service. This was an achievement of first importance, shapen in terms of the whole world-history. Russia had at the beginning assured our government that it proposed no permanent occupation of Manchuria and was present there only as the owner of a railway anxious only to secure peaceful and stable conditions for the operation of its property. John Hay took regular occasion to remind the representative of the Russian Government at Washington of this assurance, and to impress upon him the fact that our government had noted the assurance and accepted it in literal form.

John Hay appeared upon the scene in this critical juncture because our controversy with Spain had just at that time laid responsibilities upon our nation and established its interests in Asiatic waters. The juncture was rendered for us peculiarly critical by the fact that just at that time England was preoccupied in the Boer War and

had suffered notable decline of international prestige through the prolongation of that conflict. Whether by agreement or otherwise the United States stepped into the administration of what had hitherto been the English policy in the Chinese Orient. It was the policy of non-partition, of leaving China as a whole to work out its own adjustment to world-conditions, to administer its own awakening.

Close upon this event followed the Russo-Japanese war, the issue of which has certainly been to thrust back Russia from its debouchment upon the open ocean, and transform Japan from an island power to a power encircling the Sea of Japan.

If this issue shall be established as a permanent fact of history, the verdict means that this latter-day reversion to the caravan routes and the eastward track as the means of accomplishing the assimilation of the East to the West has met with rebuff, and again gone down in failure. The failure will have been due in chief measure to two things; first, the appearance of America as a power in the Pacific; second, the rise of Japan into the position of a modern nation able to assert itself. But it was from America Japan received its impulse toward the adoption of the modern equipment of life. The occidentalism which has affected it has come around the globe westward by the ocean route, not by the old eastward route on land.

The great problem with which world-history will have to deal in the next centuries concerns the assimilation of Eastern Asia to the other world-half. All through the long history of mankind India and China have gone their own way. They have received little or nothing from the thought and experience of the rest of the world, and given little to it. Their views of the universe and of the purpose and meaning of life are their own, developed out of their own experience and reflection without conference with the West. The man of the West and the man of

the East cannot therefore understand each other. There are no common factors in their thought. In superficial things they may seem to establish a temporary understanding, but they are apart on the fundamentals. They translate each other's thoughts by words that seem to be equivalents, but they are not; the concepts differ. When the Yankee thinks he has caught the secret of the Chinaman, then is he of all men most miserable; his trouble has really just begun, for to his ignorance is added the deceitful assurance of knowledge. To understand the guileless prattle of one of these sons of the Celestial Kingdom is one thing; it would be quite another to enter the mysterious caverns of a Chinese head, dwell in the quirks and convolutions of his brain, and look out through his eyes upon the world. Even if you then thought you knew the Chinaman, you surely would not recognize the world as being anything you had seen before.

The human society to which all we occidentals belong is a long-time work of history, and highly complicated, both as to materials and the forms of their blending and use. Every people and tribe, every religion and culture from Assyria to Ireland has contributed its part. We measure boards by Assyrian inches and jokes by the standards of Irish humor. All the elements of this vast and complicated social mass have become with time and intercourse and interchange more or less assimilated to each other. An Armenian and a Swede are infinitely nearer to each other than either is to a Hindoo or a Chinaman. India and China have not yet come into the world's kneading-trough. The time of their bringing in cannot, however, be longer delayed. The globe has shrunk to one-half in twenty years, and the nooks and lurking places are disappearing, and the barriers of mountain, desert, ocean.

The assimilation of this other world-half, so far as it concerns fundamental things,—the view-points of the inner

religion and folk-philosophy, will be slow, exceeding slow. The solid earth may not have the staying power and patience to wait therefore. But in the superficial things of materials, their making, use, and interchange, the assimilation will come fast, possibly too fast for the safety of the world. If the enormous force of the trained industrial patience of China shall be on a sudden armed with modern steel weapons, *i.e.*, machinery, engines, dynamos, rails, it means, of course, for the world an industrial cataclysm, an economic revolution and upturning from the depths. The Chinese patience in toil is not a personal acquisition of individuals; it is trained into the bone of the race, and the quality and quantity of it combine to give China a latent working force, an industrial power far exceeding that of all the nations added together. The native steadiness and conservatism of the Chinese must however give us fair assurance that the industrial transformation will come gradually enough for economic conditions at large to adapt themselves thereto.

However this all may be, the main fact which concerns us in connection with the analysis we have been attempting is this: the assimilation of the Chinese Orient to the modern world is through the Pacific Ocean by the westward path of the sun. The Pacific was of old a lonesome place where the day could change its clothes of number and name without being observed. The old world looked inward; China and India toward their river valleys, the occidental half toward the Mediterranean. The modern world is the old world turned inside out with outlook toward Oceanos that flows around the continents. When America was first occupied by colonists the inward-looking people of the old world, like the dwellers in an old Roman house built around a court with few outside windows, regarded the new continent as an outbuilding far back in the back yard. The colonists themselves thought of the Atlantic as something isolating them from the Old World,

and they claimed it as a wall of separation to free them from entanglement in the worn-out policies and systems and traditions of Europe, and to give them the thing they called "liberty." But now that the world has been turned inside out, the Atlantic proves to be only an estuary of the great ocean, and America, instead of being an outlying continent hidden away under the sunset, assumes its place in the center of the world, midway between the old occident and the goal of its incessant, age-long yearning, the unfathomed East.

Slowly at first but steadily throughout, and with cresting waves of energy in the last half century, the tide of advancing occidentalism has occupied the new continent and finally covered with deep flood its western coast. The Pacific Coast has thus become within fifty years the outer selvage of occidentalism. Its people, too, represent by their aggressive individualism, their riskfulness, and their power of creative initiative the most advanced type of the occidental spirit. They are what the old Greeks were in the days when Greece was the inner hem of the Occident.

A century ago when the world still looked inward and America was a distant annex and the Pacific a desert of waters, the eastern shore of our continent formed its front and façade. Now with the world turned inside out, with the Pacific established as the world's forum with the world's contrasted halves arrayed on the opposing shores, the front of the continent has shifted to the West. For its mission of the future the United States looks westward. A recent history of the United States cast in terms of geography opens with the statement: "The most important geographical fact in the past history of the United States has been their location on the Atlantic opposite Europe; and the most important geographical fact in lending a distinctive character to their future history will probably be their location on the Pacific opposite Asia."

(Semple.) I think this must be the opinion of all who have considered the course of human history in the large; I know it is the decided conviction of the writer and maker of history who lives in the White House at Washington, a conviction which has been borne in upon him with a special force by the events of the last three months.

Thus much by way of introduction, but the whole doctrine of my discussion inheres in my introduction. I might therefore do well to stop at this point, and I am sure you would be quite satisfied that I should, but there are yet sundry things which I would fain say, if only by way of annotation to my introduction.

The essential spirit of the modern ultra-occidentalism is betrayed in its ideals of education, which it derives from the Greeks, the ultra-occidentals of antiquity. The nucleoid idea therein concerns a view of the universe wherein thought is the enlivening force, and the free spirit of thinking, planning, willing man the real creative source. Science is the order that human mind injects into the haphazard and waste of savagery and nature after abstracting from them their thoughtless laws by observation. The purpose of education is the ennobling and fulfillment of manhood to its liberation from circumstance, impulse, prejudice, superstition, the rule-of-thumb, and all things that mean slavery to the instant vision and thoughtless force. The aim of education is to develop to the full all the native capacities of the individual, so that he may live abundantly and be a freeman, a freeman in the face of unthinking nature by dominating it, in the face of his human environment by judging it correctly and dealing with it justly, in the face of his own self by controlling it. The theory of the whole Chinese system of education, whether in manners, crafts, or letters, involves the effort to fit and constrain the individual into conformity with his environment, so that he may perform the tasks that are awaiting him and live the life his ancestors have prepared

for him with the maximum of adjustment and the minimum of friction. For discovery, invention, innovation, creation there is no provision, except prevention. It approaches what is viciously called in this country "practical education"—the education that assumes to give skill and the knowledge of recipes without that control of the sources and bearings of the matter which enables mind to do its creative work of adapting means to new ends, meeting new emergencies, and making a man a freeman, the master of his job and not its slave. While the Chinese education seeks to shape the individual to his environment, the American training in its best form seeks to give the individual power within himself, *i.e.*, to make *him* powerful in himself to shape and create his environment. To the American life is real; to the Chinaman it is a drama set upon a stage. The business of the individual is to take the part and play the role assigned to him in the drama. To live well in the Chinese sense is to live in "good form," to "keep face." This is the antithesis both in view of life and theory of education which we are called upon to bridge.

Within the next decades the educational institutions of the Pacific Coast in first line of those of America will surely be called upon, to an extent out of all proportion to anything in the past, to render service in opening western education to the people of the Orient. As it always has been in the history of human education, betterments and reforms will proceed from the top downward. The universities will lay the foundations. It will be the Chinamen trained in the best our universities can give who will begin the reorganization of their home education and train the teachers for the common schools. A recent Chinese graduate of the University of California has already been put at the head of the educational system of a Chinese province, and is just now busied with the difficult task of founding embryonic normal schools for the training of

the first teachers who are to infuse Western learning into the heads and lives of Chinese boys. Within the three last years, aside from the Chinese coming to the university on their own responsibility, a considerable number have been sent by one or another of the provincial governments to be trained for the government service, some in law, some in political science, some in education, some in engineering, some in commerce, and some in finance. There are no better students to-day in the university. If we can teach them initiative and sense of control and the modern sciences whose development rests upon these qualities of mind, yet we can learn from them, as our civilization can learn from its Eastern antipode, a patient recognition of the power of time and of the force residing in the inertia of great social masses and the value of persistent adherence to the obligations of duty and loyal service to the inherited order of the family and society. A man is of small use to his day and generation, be he Chinaman or American, who absolves himself, as hermit, tramp, and bandit from all relation or obligation to the life-line of descent and posterity as established in the laws and responsibilities of the fireside, the homestead, and the home community.

An entirely different problem confronts us regarding the Filipino people who have fallen under our oversight in the order of events. They came to our hands because we had a Pacific Coast. Dewey entered Manila Bay because a Spanish fleet lying there was a menace to the harbors of our coast. The rest followed inevitably. What we have done as a nation for these people is worthy of the best interpretation of our democracy. We have done what no nation has done for a colony of alien race. We have sought to give them through education the power of self-determination. They differ from all other oriental peoples in that they have enjoyed the advantage of centuries under Christian influence. These centuries have not

been in vain in bringing them nearer toward an assimilation into Western civilization. While lacking the Chinese stability, they are bright and versatile, and the best of their youth will respond readily to the opportunities of our higher education and develop into leaders of their people. What is needed by their people is leaders in commerce, law, medicine, engineering, and agriculture,—not politicians. Already in considerable numbers Filipino boys are coming to our universities and schools, and the immediate future will make large demands upon the institutions of the Coast for their care.

Our nation was shapen for the work of evangelization. It has gathered into it all the bloods and faiths of the occidental world, and has moulded them together into a people out of which is emerging the concept *man*. It has based its institutions upon democracy, the most daring optimism devised by man, a system of governing whose chief *raison d'être* lies in its power to educate and uplift men by conferring responsibility, and saying to them, "The law and the kingdom, lo, they are within you." The faith of our fathers is our faith to-day; our evangelizing zeal is the zeal of democracy,—the ultimate zeal of the West,—to make men self-determining and self-governing. Is democracy a failure? Our answer is the answer of John Paul Jones to the question of the Serapis, "Have you surrendered?" :—"We have not yet begun to fight."

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